

## Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGRE-00

AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 EPG-02 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01

TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /133 W

-----013217 210940Z /21

P R 210807Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5250

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

CINCUNC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6103

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, KS

SUBJECT: NORTH KOREAN PROCLAMATION OF 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE

REF: SEOUL 5665 (DTG 070927Z JUL 77)

SUMMARY: ROKG ANNOUNCES REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE NORTH KOREAN  
PROCLAIMED 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE. MOFA OFFICIAL CITES  
DANGER OF UPSETTING KOREAN ARMISTICE AND INCREASED  
POSSIBILITY OF DISPUTES, AS WELL AS DESIRE TO AVOID FRICTION  
WITH JAPAN AND PRC WHICH HAVE NOT PROCLAIMED 200 MILE ZONE  
IN WATERS OFF KOREA, AS REASONS WHY ROK WILL NOT AT THIS  
TIME PROCLAIM ITS OWN 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE. NORTH KOREAN  
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ECONOMIC ZONE ANNOUNCEMENT KEEPS OPEN POSSIBILITY THAT ZONE  
COULD BE USED AS EXCUSE TO OBJECT TO ACITVITIES BY U.S.  
MILITARY VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT WITHIN ZONE, BUT PRESENT  
NORTH KOREAN DESIRE TO AVOID FRICTION WITH U.S. MAKES  
THIS PROSPECT UNLIKELY AT LEAST IN SHORT TERM  
IN EMBASSY'S VIEW. END SUMMAR

1. FOLLOWING MESSAGE REVIEWS RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON 200 MILE ECONOMIC SEA LIMIT WHICH NORTH KOREA HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL ESTABLISH, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1. IN ADDITION TO CLAIMING SOVEREIGNTY OVER SEA RESOURCES AND PROHIBITING VARIOUS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, NORTH KOREA'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF JULY 1 PROHIBITS "SEA AND AIR POLLUTION" AND "ALL OTHER ACTIVITIES DETRIMENTAL TO DPRK PEOPLE AND RESOURCES" WITHIN THE ZONE. ESTABLISHMENT OF ZONE COULD THUS CONCEIVABLY BE USED AS EXCUSE FOR INTERFERENCE IN U.S. MILITARY ACTIVITIES SUCH AS INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS OFF NORTH KOREA OUTSIDE OF PRESENTLY CLAIMED 12 MILE LIMIT. NORTH KOREAN PROCLAMATION COULD ALSO THEORETICALLY BE USED AS BASIS FOR EXTENDING ITS JURISDICTION TO WATERS AROUND NORTHWESTERN ISLANDS. PRESENT NORTH KOREAN 12 MILE TERRITORIAL SEA CLAIM HAS SIMILAR EFFECT, HOWEVER, AND NORTH KOREA THUS FAR IN PRACTICE HAS NOT USED IT TO INTERFERE WITH UN CONTROL OF THOSE ISLANDS. AT THIS JUNCTURE EMBASSY AND UNC WILL KEEP AN EYE ON NORTH KOREAN ACTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH NEW PROCLAMATION, BUT DO NOT REGARD AS LIKELY IN NEAR FUTURE ANY NORTH KOREAN EFFORT TO FORCE A CONFRONTATION WITH U.S.G. MILITARY VESSELS OR AIRCRAFT ON BASIS OF THE NEW NORTH KOREAN CLAIM. CAUTION WITH WHICH NORTH KOREANS RESPONDED TO JULY 14 HELICOPTER INCIDENT PROVIDES MOST RECENT EVIDENCE THAT NORTH KOREANS DO NOT WISH TO CONFRONT U.S. FORCES OR TAKE ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT ON U.S. TROOP WITHDRAWAL.

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2. ROKG JULY 15 ANNOUNCED IT WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE NORTH KOREAN 200 MILE CLAIM. THIS ACTION REFLECTS, ACCORDING TO MOFA ASIA BUREAU DIRECTOR KONG NO-MYONG, PRESENT ROKG VIEW THAT ROK INTERESTS DO NOT REQUIRE ESTABLISHMENT OF SIMILAR ZONE BY ROK. KONG CITED JAPANESE DECISION NOT TO ESTABLISH THEIR 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE INTO SEA OF JAPAN AND PRC INACTION AS FURTHER REASON FOR ROKG TO AVOID BEING STAMPEDED INTO HASTY PROCLAMATION OF 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE. KONG SAID ROK INTERESTS APPEARED MOST LIKELY TO BE SERVED BY ATTEMPT TO PRESERVE HARMONY WITH ITS OVERSEAS NEIGHBORS.

3. KONG ALSO NOTED THAT ROKG HAD CAUTIONED JAPANESE AGAINST HURRYING INTO AN AGREEMENT CONCERNING FISHING IN THE NEWLY PROCLAIMED NORTH KOREAN ECONOMIC AREA WHICH MIGHT IMPLY OFFICIAL JAPANESE RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA. HE SAID THAT JAPAN FISHING INTERESTS IN VICINITY OF ROK WERE PROBABLY SUFFICIENT TO ACT AS A RESTRAINT ON JAPANESE IN THIS CONNECTION.

4. KONG ALSO NOTED THAT POTENTIAL FOR UPSETTING KOREAN ARMISTICE WAS PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT REASON WHY ROKG

REFUSING TO RECOGNIZE NORTH KOREAN PROCLAIMED ZONE AND  
WOULD PROBABLY REFRAIN FROM PROCLAIMING ITS OWN ZONE.  
HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT NORTH KOREAN PROCLAMATION WOULD  
CREATE NEW AREAS OF DISPUTE IN VICINITY OF NORTHERN LIMIT  
LINE, NEAR NORTHWEST ISLANDS. ROK MEASURES WOULD  
SIMULTANEOUSLY REJECT LEGALITY OF NORTH KOREAN CLAIMS WHILE  
AVOIDING ACTIONS LIKELY TO INVITE CONFLICT.  
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## Message Attributes

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